(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the steps, if any, taken to tackle the situatiion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The process of economic restructuring in the Soviet Union has had a negative impact on the supply of non-ferrous metals by Soviet suppliers. As per the LGCIS provisional statistics the import of non-ferrous metals stood at Rs. 24.86 crores only during January-August 1991 as against about Rs. 59.97 crores during the same period in 1990. The matter has been taken up with the Soviet Authorities.

Retaliatory Trade action against India due to violation of U.S. Trade Law

359. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently received any communication from U.S. Government with regard to taking action against India for violations of the Special 301 clause of U.S. trade law; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Indo-Soviet Trade Agreement

360. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an uncertainty over the Indo-Soviet rupee trade agreement as per the news-item entitled "Political uncertainty hits Indo-Soviet Trade' which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 1st September, 1991;

(b) if so, what are the facts in this regard;

(c) whether there is any insistence on the part of the Soviet Union to trade in hard currency; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard so that the Indo-Soviet trade flow does not suffer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The Agreement between India and the USSR providing for trade in non-convertible Indian rupees is valid up to 31st December, 1995. The rapid and structural economic and political changes taking place in the Soviet economy may however necessitate some changes in the trading format for ensuring smooth continuance of trade.

(c) No such proposal has been received.

(d) Does not arise.

Ban on export of finished leather

361. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Financial Express of the 19th September, 1991, captioned "Ban on finished leather export"; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to help the exporters who have already committed export-orders with foreign buyers before such ban?